

EASTER - The Birthday of the Gods

by

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"For since by man came death,

By man came also the resurrection of the dead."

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE GODS

When one begins even faintly to gain some sound intellectual comprehension of the deep import of the Easter festival, the challenge to express its message of consummative exaltation for the human spirit must strike the mind with dismay. Marvelous as words are to embody concepts of the mind, they here fail signally to carry to the inner level of consciousness the reality of the *experience* which the Easter halleluiahs and hosannas are designed to celebrate. It may even be said truly that the meaning of the great festival of the vernal equinox is to be registered not at all in the domain of mental concepts, even when these yield full cognitive understanding, but is to be realized in the sphere of transcendental recognitions that belong more to feeling than to thought.

Yet, even when the experience is allocated to the realm of feeling, it is feeling elevated to the seventh degree above what the word commonly connotes in human psychology. It is a feeling that may be said to overpass the mind and soar into the heaven of mystical ravishment of the soul in supernal delights. Yet it is feeling that is generated by the mind itself, the child of pure cognition, so clear in its insights that they lift the soul into the very ecstasy of lucid discernment of exalted blessedness. Even at its highest peak of realization for mortals at the present human stage the grade and dynamic force of sentiency which the Easter message can

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adumbrate is only a faint morning glow of the full sun of divine glory which the future evolution of man's consciousness is destined to bring to reality. The best that our minds can give us now of our eventual divinization is only by the faintest analogy seen as a foretaste of rapture that will greet us at the summit of our mount of attainment. The mind can formulate a fairly true and correct construction of the issues and elements combining to bring us to the shining Hill of the Lord, can even see in what fashion the powers of deific unfoldment will open out for us a grander vision of beatitude. Yet this is only an outline, a diagram. The signs and symbols of its overpowering reality of being can not by sheer mental genius be transformed into conscious immediacy of experience until the human shall find himself transfigured by the inner radiance of his own final Easter morn.

In venturing upon the attempt to portray the significance of the Easter event one is moved to repeat as an invocation the lines of Tennyson inspired by his observation of the waves breaking eternally on the ocean strand:

*Break, break, break on thy cold gray stones, O sea!
And would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.*

If language, employing the very remarkable psychic witchery of words, falls short of expressing the wonder of our apotheosization, the one remaining mode of expressing the profundity and the majesty of our uplift is song. The best that mortals can do, standing thus in prospect of their destined home of glory, is to throw all the unction of their mind and soul into rapturous contemplation of the delights of an imperishable Eden and pour it out

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in the measures and rhythms of joyous song. Human throats should well nigh burst with strains of praise as human hearts rise in anticipation of that glory which shall be theirs. Surely the least that men can do is to raise to the heavens their anthems, their chorals, their oratorios to hail in annual memorial their divinization to be.

For, be it said at the outset, Easter celebrates an event that is yet to be, not an event that is past. To the inevitable extent that past events lose their cogency for deep impressiveness and become shadowy and unrealized memories, the mighty power of the Easter occasion loses its pungent goad to conscious recognitions in proportion as its celebration is taken to be the

commemoration of an event that has long ago happened and passed into history. It will therefore amaze most readers to be shown that no less an authority than St. Paul (in 2 *Timothy* 2:16-18) emphasizes this very consideration when he warns the brethren: "But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who, concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." As, according to all scholarly datings of St. Paul's Epistles, this admonition to Timothy would have been penned near the year 60 A. D., i.e., within two or three decades *after the resurrection of Jesus* in Jerusalem, its reminder to the brethren that the resurrection was a concept of doctrinal import, the reality of which was to be actualized by man in his exaltation yet to be must be received as a message of totally unrealized import for all future Christianity.

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EASTER OUR FUTURE GOAL

The great religion of the Western world suffered a fatal loss when from about the third century down to the present the cryptic sense of a purely dramatic representation of man's still unattained burgeoning into godhood on the bright morn of his evolutionary Easter was buried and forgotten under the ignorant misconception of the event as the physical arising of one man's human body from its rocky hillside tomb on a given first Easter dawn. If that is what, under Christian persuasion, we are to believe happened two thousand years ago and that is what we are asked to assume that the great equinoctial memorial celebrates, then the ceremony of halleluiah merely embellishes the memory of an event long gone, whose cosmically heralded universal deification of human life is in fact to be searched for in vain in the record of history since it occurred. Christian history records not a trace of the fulfilment of that human glorification which the epochal event was proclaimed as promising. Every choral in the intervening centuries rang with the exultant cry that "Death is swallowed up in victory. The grave has lost its sting. Man no more shall die. Christ's resurrection gave man his immortality." Yet death has seized every man born since that day and the cemetery graves still hold their dead.

It is as St. Paul has said: the majesty, the beauty and the true exultation that alone can lift the human soul to the heights on every recurring Easter morning inheres in the certain knowledge that the Easter glory is still the goal of our progressive march up the hill of being. Our

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shining goal still gleams afar in the distant horizon of our vision, an undimmed star of our radiant future.

Easter is the ceremonial that crowns all the other religious festivals of the year with its springtime halo of resurrected life. It is to dramatize the final end in victory of man's long struggle through the inferior kingdoms of matter and bodily incarnation in grades of fleshly existence. Other festivals around the year memorialize the various stages of this slow progress through the recurring round of the cycles of manifestation. Easter commemorates the end in triumph, all lower obstacles overcome, all "enemies" conquered, all darkness of ignorance vanquished, all fruits and the golden harvest of developed powers garnered in the eternal barn of an inner holy of holies of consciousness, all battles won, peace with aeonial victory assured at last.

*The fight is o'er, the battle done,
The victory of life is won!
The song of triumph hath begun,--
Halleluiah!*

The Greek word for the resurrection is *anastasis*, the "standing up," "the up-arising." It has little if at all been noted that this *anastasis* is only by a little prefix distinguished from "*ecstasis*," our "ecstasy." With *ec-* (*ex*) meaning "out," the etymology here brings us face to face with an item of unrecognized moment, that our final dissociation of soul from body at the end of our last incarnation will bring us an experience of *ecstasy*. Human life, a dour struggle, will be measurably buoyed up in spirit if the

peregrinating soul knows that at the long terminal his release will come with rapture beyond

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thought. If, as much religious philosophy has it, man enters into this world of objective existence in tears, his first utterance a cry, he will be strengthened throughout its long and toilsome way by the assurance that he will make his final exit from his "tomb" of the flesh in transports of Edenic bliss. His "up-standing" is also his "outstanding" from his grave of body. For the sage Greeks used the same term, with but a change of the vowel to mark the distinction, for both the *body* and the *tomb*; for *body* was *soma* and *tomb* was *sema*. In the esoteric philosophy of this knowing race the human body was the living tomb, grave, sepulcher and mummy-case in which the divine soul, in incarnation, lay in "death" until resurrected by the sun of divine light and truth in the springtime turn of the cycle following the winter of sleep. It may be said here that until this sense of the terms "death" and "resurrection" is restored to Biblical interpretation no true envisagement of the purport of the Easter festival is at all possible.

Using solar symbolism and analogues in depicting the divine soul's peregrinations round the cycles of existence, the little sun of radiant spirit in man being the perfect parallel of the sun in the heavens, and exactly copying its movements, the ancient Sages marked the four cardinal "turns" of its progress round the zodiacal year as epochal stages in soul evolution. As all life starts with conception in mind, later to be extruded into physical manifestation, so the soul that is to be the god of a human being is conceived in the divine mind at the station in the zodiac marking the date of June 21. This is at the "top" of the celestial arc, where mind is most completely detached from matter, meditating in all its "purity."

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Then the swing of the movement begins to draw it "downward" to give it the satisfaction of its inherent yearning for the Maya of experience which alone can bring its latent capabilities for the evolution of consciousness to manifestation. Descending then from June it reaches on September 21 the point where its direction becomes straight downward and it there crosses the line of separation between spirit and matter, the great Egyptian symbolic line of the "horizon," and becomes incarnated in material body. Conceived in the aura of Infinite Mind in June, it enters the realm of mortal flesh in September. It is born then as the soul of a human; but at first and for a long period it lies like a seed in the ground before germination, inert, unawakened, dormant, in the relative sense of the word, "dead." This is the young god lying in the manger, asleep in his cradle of the body, or as in the Jonah-fish allegory and the story of Jesus in the boat in the storm on the lake, asleep in the "hold" of the "ship" of life, with the tempest of the body's elemental passions raging all about him. He must be awakened, arise, exert himself and use his divine powers to still the storm, for the elements in the end will obey his mighty will.

Once in the body, the soul power is weighed in the scales of the balance, for the line of the border of the sign of Libra, the Scales, runs across the September equinoctial station. For soul is now equilibrated with body and out of this balance come all the manifestations of the powers and faculties of consciousness. It is soul's immersion in body and its equilibration with it that brings consciousness to function.

Then on past September, like any seed sown in the soil, the soul entity sinks its roots deeper and deeper into

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matter, for at its later stages of growth it must be able to utilize the energy of matter's atomic force to effectuate its ends for its own spiritual aggrandizement. It is itself to be lifted up to heights of cosmic consciousness, but no more than an oak can exalt its majestic form to highest reaches without the dynamic energization received from the earth at its feet can soul rise up above body without drawing forth the strength of body's dynamo of power. Down, down it descends then through the October, November and December path of the sun, until it stands at the nadir of its descent on December 21.

Here it has reached the turning-point, at which the energies that were stored potentially in it in seed form will feel the first touch of quickening power and will begin to stir into activity. At the winter solstice of the cycle the process of involution of spirit into

matter comes to a *stand-still*--just what the solstice means in relation to the sun--and while apparently stationary in its deep lodgment in matter, like moving water locked up in winter's ice, it is slowly making the turn as on a pivot from outward and downward direction to movement first tangential, then more directly upward to its high point in spirit home.

So the winter solstice signalizes the end of "death" and the rebirth of life in a new generation. It therefore was inevitably named as the time of the "birth of the Divine Sun" in man; the Christ-mas, the birthday of the Messianic child of spirit. The incipient resurgence of the new growth, now based on and fructified by roots struck deep in matter, begins at this "turn of the year,"

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as the Old Testament phrases it, and goes on with increasing vigor as, like the lengthening days of late winter, the sun-power of the spiritual light bestirs into activity the latent capabilities of life and consciousness, and the hidden beauty of the spirit breaks through the confining soil of body and stands out in the fulness of its divine expression on the morn of March 21. This brings the soul in a burst of glorious light out of the tomb of fleshly "death," giving it verily its "resurrection from the dead." It then has consummated its cycle's work by bursting through the gates of death and of hell, and marches in triumph upward to become a lord of life in higher spheres of the cosmos. No longer is it to be a denizen of lower worlds, a prisoner chained in body's dungeon pit, a soul nailed on matter's cross. It has conquered mortal decay and rises on wings of ecstasy into the freedom of eternal life. Its trysting with earthly clay is forever ended, as aloft it sweeps like a lark storming heaven's gate, with "hymns of victory" pouring from its exuberant throat. From mortality it has passed the bright portals into immortality. From man it has become god. No more shall it enter the grim underworld of "death."

*We've quaffed the soma bright
And are immortal grown;
We've entered into light
And all the gods have known.*

Easter, then, is the climactic festival of all the year, since it, signalizes the consummation of all man's life in triumph and bliss transcending present knowing. It is set in the calendar to intimate to the feeble human intellect the wonder of the transfiguration of our earthly

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life from periodical decay and death into immortal grandeur of being. At his Easter man leaves forever the kingdom of mortality, of his attachment to the elements of the world, and steps across the golden threshold into the Paradise of a conscious bliss that indeed is not too extravagantly poetized as a home of crystal radiance and bright seraphic beatitude sweetened by transporting music.

At the point symbolized by September 21 in his cyclical evolution the divine soul is born *into* humanity, making its descent from the realms of the Father's kingdom of noumenal being. If, as says Shakespeare of man, "my mind to me a kingdom is," so the Father's brooding mind is the mental kingdom of the universe, that substrate of conscious purpose which permeates, in fact structuralizes, the whole animate creation, as its constituent urge and driving force. It is that energy of the Eternal Will which, as primary Cause, stamps its form and nature upon the movement of all conscious life, first manifesting as unconscious, or subconscious, directive toward the achievement of its ends, then becoming gradually more clearly conscious of its own purpose and effort, as creatural experience aligns developing mind with the Logos of the cosmos.

Unseen as yet by general religion, it was necessary for God's sons, who must start as mortals to gain immortality, to descend into matter and be long subjected to its sluggish dominance. Ignorantly and mistakingly has conventional religion, in its hasty, superficial and erratic interpretation of Biblical material, assumed that this ostracism of his children by God himself to lower

worlds remote from the Father's benignant presence, was somehow a sad consequence of the children's wayward errancy and an untoward and disastrous misadventure of primal mankind. The truth envisages no such direful miscarriage of the plans of Eternal Mind. God's mental progeny could well be entrusted to the tutelary custodianship of nature, indeed injected into her maternal womb, since nature was from the first and eternally ensouled by the Father's energetic mind power, and all nature's processes exhibited the divine design at work in open manifestation. God could safely consign his youthful offspring to the educative guardianship of the "old nurse," Mother Nature. For as a pedagogue Mother Nature could never misteach her divine pupils, herself being the preceptress, the living exemplar and expression of the cosmic mind.

SOUL IN NATURE'S WOMB

At the September point the soul enters what the ancients called its "feminine phase," as it was in its youth and under the care of its maternal, or material, parent. It became the infant prince of a future kingship, being for its tutelage and education in its childhood stage, and, as St. Paul says (*4 Galatians*), "under tutors and guardians until the time appointed of the Father," at which time it would have developed its capacity for kingly rule of the lower elements of its dominion over man's life. Thus the apostle says that though it is (potentially) Lord of all, it is at this stage in servitude to the elements (or elementals) of the lower worlds until the day of its enthronement. In this bondage to the laws of physis, the powers of matter, which is strictly for its education, it is the unawakened soul in an animal body. As Plato puts it, it is through its body an animal, while through its mind it is a god. It is then what St. Paul distinguishes as the "first" or "natural" man, the man of animal propensities, obeying the lusts of the flesh and the urges of the "carnal mind," these being the instincts of the body in which it is ensconced.

So one might say that at September the soul is born "from above,"--the Bible phrase--*into* animality; at December it is awakened enough to be born at the next higher stage, *humanity*; and at Easter in March it is reborn into the still higher kingdom of the immortal gods. If September is the birthday of man the human who is potentially divine, March is the birthday of man as a god. Easter is the birthday of the gods. Says the hoary

Book of the Dead, designating the soul by one of its several specific titles, Pepi: "*Pepi saileth with Ra to the eastern side of heaven, where the gods are born.*"

We, as souls, go to our "death" in matter at the equinox; at the winter solstice we cease "dying" to matter and are quickened to incipient renewal of life; at the spring equinox we rise to supernal life in exuberance of blessedness. Only when the soul has traversed this aeonial path round the numberless cycles of existence can it know the full reality of its Easter deification.

By apt and striking symbols the Sages of old sought to impress dull mortal thought with imagery suggestive of new birth. They pointed to the chick pecking its way out of its shell; the snake shedding its old skin and coming forth sleek and shining; the locust bursting out of its old body and winging its way up into the light and air; the beetle emerging out of the earth; the butterfly

from the cocoon; the hibernating bear awaking from his sleep in the hollow tree; the emergence of all life from the egg. Hence the egg became the basic symbol of the festival, as the young god breaks finally the shell of his human body to effect his delivery from the flesh and be released into the absolute freedom of the spirit. The rabbit was brought in as concomitant symbol because, like the pomegranate in the vegetable kingdom, its exuberant fecundity made it an apt emblem of the boundless productivity of life. For God's children, under the Biblical designation of Israelites, or children of Israel, were destined to be as numberless as the stars of heaven or the seashore sands.

The *Book of the Dead* (so called by the German scholar Lepsius) has for its Egyptian title the hieroglyph

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Pert em Heru, the translation of which is given variously as "The Day of Manifestation," or, more exactly, "The Coming Forth by Day," referring to the emergence of Horus, the Egyptian Christ, from the dark underworld of Amenta into the upper kingdom of light. Light here, as universally in both Scripture and poetry, must be taken in its apt reference to spiritual illumination or the expanded powers of consciousness. Like Jesus, Horus had been overpowered by the darkness of the underworld and Sut its Overlord, which are just the life of nature. In the person of his Father Osiris, he had been crucified, dead and buried. Now in the enchanting wizardry of the spring of a cycle of conscious growth, he had risen from the tomb of bodily "death." He had rent the veil of the temple of his mortal flesh and stood out arrayed in new garments of shining radiance. He had thrown off his grave clothes, the cerements of "death", and walked out of the sepulcher of clay clothed in the imperishable robes of solar light.

*The day of resurrection,
Earth tell it out abroad
The Passover of gladness,
The Passover of God.*

*From death to life eternal,
From earth unto the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over
With hymns of victory.*

But alas, and again alas, the consummative festival that was in its origin and in its deep esoteric conception designed to impress annually, in the thrilling springtime rebirth of earth's vegetation, the recognition of the apocalyptic glorification of humanity at its eventual evolutionary Easter day, and therefore was intended to serve

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as a potent psychological agency of moving power in the race's own push to divinity, has almost totally missed its high objective, because from about the degenerate third century of the Christian era the dull mind of Western humanity has mistaken the festival's message as having meaning only in reference to the alleged resurrection of one single man in remote history. That which was formulated to bring cogent realization to all men of their ultimate apotheosization in glory has sunk to the dimensions of the anniversary celebration of one single event in past history,—which even St. Paul warns us is not past. All the fervor of majestic significance and all the instigation to nobility of life that were designed to grip all hearts and minds when celebrated under the almost magical mental spur of the vernal transformation of nature, has been run out into the drain and emerged as a mere sentimental celebration of a past event in one man's shadowy life. And when the "celebration" each year is over, the "event" is quickly forgotten, as is similarly and for the same reason the case with Christmas. Never will these two great

symbolic festivals exert their truly divine potential for human uplift until, instead of being staged as memorials of past events in the life of a Galilean peasant of two thousand years ago, they are sensed as dramatizing, the one, the incipient "birth" of a Christly consciousness, the other, the ultimate exaltation of that consciousness in the interior life of all humanity. Never were they supposed to be taken as memorials of *objective* history; they are eternally living memorials of our *subjective* history, in the past, now and in the future.

The judgment here expressed that the perversion, yea the transmogrification of the meaning of the Scrip-

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tural dramas and allegories into ostensible objective history allegedly localized in Judea in the first Christian century (and Old Testament history antecedent to that time) has been courageously endorsed by no less an authority in modern thought than the most eminent psychologist, Carl G. Jung, who sums up the gist of the position here advanced in the following paragraphs:

"The *Imitatio Christi* will forever have this disadvantage: we worship a man as a divine model, embodying the deepest meaning of life, and then out of sheer imitation we forget to make real the profound meaning present in ourselves.

"If I accept the fact that a god is absolute and beyond all human experience, he leaves me cold. I do not affect him, nor does he affect me. But if I know, on the other hand, that God is a mighty activity within my own soul, at once I *must* concern myself with him."

In a later work (*Psychology and Alchemy*, p. 7) Jung has elaborated this trenchant expression in greater specification. These pronouncements from the great psychologist stand out in modern study as judgments of the most arresting momentousness. They stand as a forthright challenge to the system of Christianity in its ground-claims as the religion wielding the highest moral-spiritual influence in the sphere of psychology. This *Imitatio Christi* (the imitation of Christ) embodied the faith's supreme mode of the manifestation of its beneficent power to exalt the life of its votaries. Yet this, its mightiest arm of unction and its sharpest sword of the spirit, Jung asserts is the feeblest of its psychological instruments, a very vacuum indeed where real power should be at work. The Church of Christ is certain that it has fulfilled the highest demand, the ultimate proof of

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the incontestable efficacy of its code of doctrinal affirmations, when it asserts to the world that in the force of its followers' sincere and consecrated effort to imitate the divine model in Christ Jesus, the man, it has presented the most direct and dynamic power of uplift in all the range of religious ideals. What, it has asked a thousand times, can compare for downright practical efficacy with the earnest effort of good people to imitate the paragon of Christliness, the Christ-man himself? Jung is not unaware of the pregnancy of the question; he surely has canvassed it from all quarters. Yet he reiterates his asseveration that it is this very objective, and all the more decisively because of the very assiduity and conscientiousness of its pursuit, that creates the spiritual vacuum in the inner life of the devotee and defeats the one sole and final aim of any true religion, which is the spiritualization of the individual worshipper in the inner core of his soul's being. Since the psychologist's position is controversial and seems highly paradoxical, it is well to cite the basic statement that he has made.

"I am speaking, therefor, not of the deepest and best understanding of Christianity, but of the superficialities and disastrous misunderstandings that are plain for all to see. The demand made by the *Imitatio Christi*--that we should follow the ideal and seek to become like it--ought logically to have the result of developing and exalting the inner man. In actual fact, however, the ideal has been turned by superficial and formalistically-minded believers into an external object of worship, and it is precisely this veneration for the object that prevents it from reaching down into the depths of the soul and transforming it into a

wholeness in keeping with the ideal. Accordingly the divine mediator stands outside as an image, while meaning remains fragmentary and untouched in the deepest part of him."

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The sincere effort to emulate the Son of God, the psychologist affirms, *should* edify, spiritualize and exalt the individual Christian. But, and not too strangely, he says it does not work out to this result. And it fails to do so precisely in proportion to the intensity of the effort exerted to push the imitative enterprise outward and focus it upon the external historical model. To achieve true efficacy in religious worship, he implies, the intensity of effort must be directed to stirring to life a power resident within. The cause of failure is the *outward* direction of the devotion. The very act of imitation of an external model turns the edifying force away from its proper objective, the inner man. The worship of an outer god leaves the divinity within untouched, unknown and unawakened. To adore the exterior paragon, by so much leaves unrealized the potential perfectibility of the soul itself.

While it can be contended--and Jung concedes the point--that in sincere emulation of the divine man some at least of his virtue and transforming power must rub off onto the imitator, it is nevertheless an irrefutable deduction that the psychologist here makes from the premises: if the devoted religionist focuses the potency of his psychological consecration upon an external exemplar, he misses the benefaction of developing his own inner deity. In proportion as one exalts and looks to the imaged perfection without, he lets his own soul lie fallow. It is not a distant historical Christ's soul that he needs to exalt; it is his own that cries for attention, recognition and adoration. Like the knight who roamed afar to find the Holy Grail, he will return from his quest to uplift the historical Jesus, only to discover the real Christ pleading for his devotion deep down in his own soul.

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IF CHRIST BE NOT RISEN

A thousand times has Christianity proclaimed that if the Christ-man, Jesus of Nazareth, has not consummated his conquest of *physical* death, and returned to *physical* life following bodily decease, "then is our faith vain." We have cited the very man--Paul--who promulgated this crucial averment, as himself saying that the resurrection is certainly not a past event. How precarious the whole edifice of the Christian faith is can be envisaged if we look also at the fact that for some of the most learned, conscientious and eminent theologians of the faith the veracity of the Gospel's account of the resurrection of Jesus has come to stand in the gravest possible doubt. We face here the staggering recognition of the collapse of this central arch of the whole Christian structure, as it is undermined by the conclusions of leading Church spokesmen and scholars, to the effect that it is questionable whether the Gospel Jesus character was really a man of flesh. One of the most capable, conscientious and eminent of exegetists in the Christian camp, Johannes Weiss, goes so far as to say that nobody really believes that the deceased body of Jesus was reanimated, arose, cast off its burial wrappings and walked out of its sealed hillside tomb on that "first" Easter morn two thousand years ago. For its amazing frankness and its devastating implications his statement is quite worth citation (*The History of Primitive Christianity*):

"But for ourselves we must admit that we can no longer think in such terms. To be exact, the majority of Christians at the present time do not really believe in a resurrection of the flesh on the last day."

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And hence they do not believe it happened in the case of Jesus in year 33 A.D.

Weiss, whom many rate as the greatest of modern theological critics and exegetists, indeed cuts through the restraints of orthodox caution and boldly asserts that--referring to Jesus--

"Not only did he *not* 'rise again' in the real sense, i.e. to take up his earthly life once more, nor did this take place either 'on the third day' or 'after three days.' Where did it [the three-day period] originate? Since everything took place according to the Scriptures, as St. Paul says, it is to the Scriptures that we must turn."

And he then cites the verses in *Hosea* 6:1 ff, as the origin of the tradition. The second verse runs: "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Even with this (and other similar verses in Old Testament "prophecy") as legendary background of claimed divine forecast of the Christian dispensation in history, one must ask by what justification the literary fulfillers of prophecy twisted the divine promise of a resurrection clearly stated to be the happy destiny of *all* of "us," into the objectivized history of one single human. Debate may rage until doomsday, but there is only one answer to this challenge, the only one that will measure up to the demands of truth: a background of spiritual tradition, which clearly dramatized the apotheosization of all humanity, was by ignorant men converted into the quasi-history of the life of a hero of ancient ritual, who himself was but a type-figure of our inchoate divinity in its full flower.

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In other works we have incontestably shown that so-called Bible "prophecy" is not permissibly taken as prophecy in the sense of foretelling future objective event. The word itself is composed of *pro*, the prefix meaning "*forth*," and the *phe* stem of the Greek word *phemi*, meaning "to speak." the word therefore simply carries the signification of "speaking forth," "uttering," in fact "preaching." There is evidence to show that it did not originally in Scriptural literature carry the connotation of predicting future events, at any rate not events of objective history. Of course, in the broad sense of viewing the course of human history and the evolution of man in the large, the Scriptures teem with forecasts of the "coming of Messiah." It was almost the dominant theme of ancient religious literature. In fact the passages giving the promise of inspired writing to this effect are just those portions of Scripture that have erroneously been taken to refer to the objective event of a divine child's birth on a given day and in a given locale. It is the old story of mistaking exalted allegory for literal history.

The author of the *Book of Ecclesiastes* in the Old Testament is in the book's very title called "The Preacher." In ancient Egyptian religious books which dramatized the forms and stages of the divinization of man, there was a character always called "The Speaker." He it was who played the part of the Christ-soul in the representations and in this exalted capacity uttered or pronounced the divine "sermon" preached on the "mount of earth," meaning here in our world. He spoke the words of the Christos in his sermon to the men of earth. The "Sermon on the Mount" is just the preach-

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ment of the heavenly soul in our nature to the human counterpart.

As showing the auspicious drift of modern exegetists toward a sane and rational reading of the Scriptures, what Weiss adds on the resurrection is much too valuable to be skipped. Referring again to Jesus, and citing the disposition of the orthodox to think that his resurrection must be differentiated from what ours is to be, and thus warranting a treatment on different and special grounds, he says:

"Had we no other evidence of his victory over death than that of our own departed, the whole thing would fall into uncertainty. This objection really touches the essential point. If his immortality is no different from ours, it can scarcely be used any longer as proof of our hope for the life to come."

This view, continues the theologian, flunks the hope and faith of steadfast believers, who therefore cling tenaciously to the old view that the Gospel narratives still provide adequate grounds for their indoctrinated belief that Jesus was physically restored to life. But the exegetist goes on:

"Unfortunately it is to be feared that this support will never again appear as firm and immovable as it did to our forefathers. In some form or other, even among the most ardent believers, doubt has begun to undermine the narrative of the Gospels. And when we are admonished that we must 'believe' these narratives, the admonition lacks sense and meaning today. The word 'believe' is misused in such a connection. It is simply misapplied to a fact in the past. [How amazingly this statement corroborates St. Paul's asseveration that the resurrection is not to be considered a past event!] Either a fact is established beyond

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all doubt--in which case there is no need to 'believe' it; or else it is uncertain--in which case to believe it, that is, to suppress and silence doubt, would be dishonorable . . . Alas, how easily the structure may collapse and how frail it really is, even for many who think they hold the true faith. Our belief in life to come, [which is not, however, the specific Christian doctrine of the resurrection] if it is to have permanence, must have other foundation than some narrative of events *full of contradictions and impossibilities*. But even were the Gospel narratives far less contradictory and far more reliable than they are, our faith could not be based on such a foundation. For in so serious a question as this, one can decide and believe only on the basis of his own experience and conviction, not upon that of the strange and--as far as we are concerned--unexaminable experience of others long ago."

What the learned German scholar is courageously expressing in all his critique of the resurrection doctrine is the conviction, to which his penetrating discernment forced him, that the Gospel narrative of the Easter mystery is strictly not narrative at all in the sense of literary record of outward physical event, but is dramatic or poetic figurism of the consummative exaltation which all humanity is destined to achieve at the cycle's end. The Christ's ritualistic arising out of "death" is literary type-graph of our aeonial Easter beatification. That and nothing more. But--let it be said here--not just *that* in the slighting sense of *only that*. We must think of *that* as the ineffable transporting deification of our mortal existence. And when it is finally seen in all the majesty and splendor of its true significance as portraying the climactic attainment of all human experience, as the lifting of lowly mortal life "from earth

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unto the sky," it will be sensed at last that in this meaning the drama of the resurrection immeasurably outshines in mystic beauty and dynamic motivation to nobility of life any sentiment or inspiration that can be generated by the alleged "miracle" of Jesus' physical resurrection. This will still be obdurately denied, no doubt. But its truth must be recognized if the general mind is to be liberated from groundless religious hypnotizations, no matter how firmly pietistic inculcation has fixed them in the subconscious.

The effort to confirm the position that the true original significance of the Easter memorial can not be made to derive from a literal or physical interpretation of the resurrection "event" has carried the essay afield from the main elucidation of the essential meaning of Easter. But it was imperative that it be shown conclusively how the import of the observance has deplorably

miscarried into a melange of false beliefs. It can be stated concisely that the whole devastating debacle of sense and truth ensued from the egregious blunder--always imminent when esoteric truths are given openly to the uninitiated masses--in reading the substance of the Mystery plays, the spiritual allegories, myths and other dramatizations of lofty truth conceptions, as the objectified and historicized experience of one man, the central Christ figure. After nineteen centuries of obscurity this catastrophic imbecility now emerges in clear light.

The resurrection had not come. But the human mind needed the psychological spur and goad, or the allure of an enchanting vision of its high calling in the perfection of its Christly nature, to inspire it to the life of righteous-

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ness that alone would consummate it. Hence the death and resurrection drama was formulated--and not by any means solely in Christian circles, but universally in the world of old--to typify in beautiful imagery, in story and in the dynamic magic of the histrionic art, the glory of the experience awaiting all humans on their morn of deification. It was to impress on all minds, in forms of moving beauty and power, the "death" and resurrection of that divine unit of soul essence which for our physical life here had enwombed itself in the "grave" or "tomb" of flesh. Mortals were to be kept in memory of the cardinal truth that the body, though itself subject to decay, gives birth to the soul's innate potentialities, as was represented in the Samson allegory of the bees (always typical of the soul) building a nest of honey in the decaying carcass of the slain lion.

But this incarnational "death" of soul in body became horribly distorted into the physical death of Jesus' quivering flesh on a wooden cross. The wood of the alleged cross on Golgotha stands as quite an apt symbol of the woodenness of the crass misinterpretation of the Fundamentalists. Likewise another beautiful poetic symbol, the three hours of darkness over the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour, i.e., figuratively from the aeonial Christmas birth to Easter resurrection (the three dark months of winter), has generated in the minds of misled "believers" the actual darkness of the Western theological understanding. This darkness has brought, not three hours, but many centuries of what the historians have been constrained to dub the "Dark Ages" of Christian Europe. The Biblical prophecy that "darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the peo-

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ple has been all too realistically and tragically fulfilled, at least for the Western world, by this staggering miscarriage of recondite symbolism into implausible and impossible "history."

For that which "died" on the cross of matter was no single individual man, but the divine nucleus of soul apportioned out among all men. It was sent forth by the heavenly Father to be the spiritual grain of wheat planted in the ground of human flesh, therein to lie long in inertness and "death," until resurrected by the rebirth of its dormant powers in the springtime turn of the cycle. And this distortion of the message of the Good Friday and the Easter rituals into the commemoration of the crucifixion and resuscitation of one human body has destroyed--as Jung so forthrightly insists--the enlightening and impelling power of the dramatized reality.

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THE SEED OF DIVINITY

Remote as it may at first seem in its relevance to the subject, the ark and deluge allegory contains the seed-germ of the truth beneath the Easter drama. *Ark* derives from the Greek *arche*, meaning "beginning." When the life that has been embodied in an organic form is released at the end of the cycle by the flood of dissolution of all created things, what is life's provision for its perpetuation and eventual renewal? Where can it retire to be tided over the flood of universal destruction, the work of Shiva the Destroyer? Nature holds the answer for us in her ever mysterious miracle of the seed. Before the end of their living cycle all things produce their seed, in which they can ride out the period of dissolution of form and at the cycle's turn begin a new era of growth and advance. Truly enough when the flood overwhelms the formal creation, life retires back into its *arche*, to betide the deluge and live again.

In the case of the individual man the body is the organic vehicle of soul's manifestation, and the soul is the body's life. On body's dissolution the life (soul) withdraws into the "ark" of an inner spiritual body (which does not decay), from which as seed it will emerge to begin the next cycle of physical life. But as soul, in the words of Greek philosophy, "imparts of its excellent nature to the beings of secondary rank," it thus suffers the diminution or loss of its higher strain of life in sacrifice to the lower, the body. It "dies" that body may live, and that more abundantly. From this aeonial "death," which spirit, the god in us, suffers on our be-

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half, it must in the turn of the cycle be resurrected. While immersed in body, body profits by, lives on, the "death" of soul; when the body is dissolved at what we call death, the soul regains its lost Paradise in disembodied being in the heavens. Each in turn "dies" to restore life to its polarized brother. Just as truly it must be seen that flesh dies that soul may live again, as that soul "dies" that body may live again. This is why we sing at Easter--

*From death to life eternal,
From earth unto the sky--*

only "life eternal" should be understood as "life aeonial," i.e., enduring throughout the aeon, or cycle; not eternal in the sense of a heavenly life forever.

Browning has discerned the unsoundness of the philosophy which exalts spirit to the heights and defames matter and body as its enemies:

*Let us not always say
'Spite of this flesh today
I stove, made head, gained ground upon the whole.'
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry: 'All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh nore now than flesh helps soul.*

Flesh and soul find themselves locked inseparably in the marriage bonds of polarity here in body. Philosophies that place all value on spirit and decry and degrade the flesh are convicted of gross misplacement of emphasis. All the ordinances of ancient systems that dramatized animal sacrifice as a form of worship were designed to stress the fact that the life of the animal body of man is likewise a sacrificial oblation for the uplift of the soul.

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All esoteric wisdom-religions of the past built on the thesis that the soul lives a more resplendent life detached from body in heaven than it does on the earth, albeit its residence in earthly body is the necessary schooling for its growth; and that it goes "dead" in seed or ark state while here in body, and must be resurrected out of that inert condition "in the fulness of time."

It is said that all Scripture is given for edification. Of first importance then it is to realize that the basic edifying item of truth the Scriptures enshrine (in myth, allegory, drama and symbol) is this underlying universal principle: the descent, the "death" in ark-seed form and then the resurrection of the seed units of divine life out of material embodiment. This single item is the lost clue to the mystery and the meaning of both life itself and the great Scriptures which pictorialize its significance.

Scriptural composition and ancient mythology are twins, both chanting the same theme-song of human life in much the same strain. So in mythology and in the wide range of folk-lore and social tradition, the same majestic epos of soul and body in evolutionary wedlock was formulated in the guise of the corn-myth, the agriculture-myth, the vegetation-myth. The seed grain went to its "death" in the ground, and the tribal or village ceremonials solemnized and ostensibly aided the seed's germination and the crop's growth to a good harvest. The ancient Egyptians symbolized the god's resurrection by the figure of the seed's "germination." "I shall not die; I shall not rot; I shall not decay; I shall not become worms," shouts the soul in the underland of

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Amenta; "I shall germinate; I shall live again." And Isaiah sings: "Thou wilt not let thy holy one to see corruption in Sheol." And over and over the Scriptures herald God's promise that, though he has had to commit his children to the underworld of material existence, he will raise them up again when they shall have mastered the inertia of matter and achieved their rejuvenation and "crossed" the lower sea of life in watery bodies in what the Egyptian scripts in one passage call "the three days of *navigation*." That this cryptic (but how obvious!) fact of our aeonial history could ever have been converted into the story of the physical death and miraculous (but impossible) resurrection of the man Jesus of Nazareth, seems beyond credibility. But it is the only key that unlocks the riddle of what has occurred in the history of religion since the third century, and the world of Christianity is going to have a harrowing time to expiate its crime of dolt-minded stupidity if it is to regain its status of worthiness after the disclosure of its age-long crassness in mistaking sublime allegory for bizarre and grotesque history.

The indisputable true resolution of the whole frightfully muddled theology is found in the simple fact that the poetic scenario of an evolutionary step from humanity to divinity that was of course never anything but universal to the race at all times, came through ignorance to be interpreted as an event in the career of the one man Jesus. What was depicted as conveying meaning for all men came to be misunderstood as the life experience of but one man. So the Western world has walked in the fog of a dense hallucination for lo these many centuries, of which sorry fact its outward history

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bears dismal testimony in the record of bigotry, superstition, persecution, hatred, war and the most fiendish inhumanity ever to be entered in the world's annals.

Nothing short of such a hypnotism by pious credulity as has been exhibited in Christendom from the third century to the present could ever account for the slavish mental acceptance by the sheepish millions of Western Christians of the unconscionable idea that one man's physical death could exert the tiniest iota of influence to change any individual's karmic relation to his cosmic problem of sin and salvation. For if it could be that the suffering of one could in the least measure later the status of all other men's moral relation to the law of life, *the moral equilibrium of the universe would be disrupted*. Not only can the action of another than himself not relieve any man of the full onus of his moral accountability, but there would immediately be chaos in the

spiritual sphere if it were possible. The two ineffaceable and unalterable realities of the world were, to the great philosopher, Emanuel Kant, "the starry heavens above and the moral law within." The Christian dogma of the vicarious atonement, a digest as it were of the alleged basic fact of the conquest of death (in its physical sense, be it remembered) by the (physical) resurrection of Jesus long ago, would--Kant must have seen--shatter the inviolability and integrity of his supreme moral law into bits. As the Christian theologians have again and again heralded it, the one unshakeable foundation of the faith is the (always physical) resurrection of Jesus. What, then, do we have to contemplate? Not only the repudiation of the veridical historicity of the bodily resurrection of the man of Nazareth, but the irrefragable

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truth of the logical determination that no man's resurrection, either bodily or in grace, can in the minutest fashion operate to save the soul of one single other man, much less, then, of a whole planetary order of beings, from the necessity of effecting their own resurrection by their own moral actions.

And what dismay must it also bring to the Christian world to have now to face, not only its own scholars' rejection of the historical resurrection narrative, by giving it a subjective instead of an objective interpretation, but also the increasing conviction of exegetists that the resurrection never occurred at all, with even the very existence of the man Jesus falling under ever-growing doubt? Ere long it will have to be seen, and welcomed gladly, that the only avenue of salvation for the Christian system from shattering disruption will be found in a resort to the purely allegorical rendering of its Scriptures, with total abandonment of the Gospel narrative as history. Long ago in the Middle Ages the Christian mystic Angelus Silesius immortalized the verse:

*Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
But not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn;
The cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain
Unless within thyself it be set up again.*

Likewise any believer who looks to the Gospel scenario of the resurrection as the already pledged certitude of his own individual escape of (physical) death, must henceforth know that he is hugging to his soul a fantastic delusion. For in spite of millions of voices raised each Easter to chant

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*Our Lord is risen,
We, too, shall rise,--*

ostensibly in the same presumed bodily manner--not a soul has risen from a churchly grave since that auspicious first Easter day. Like old John Brown's body, their cadavers "lie moldering in the grave," though happily (in spite of their resurrection blunder, let it be hoped) their souls go marching on. If Jesus' resurrection was historical and was also physical, or if it is even believed to have been physical, what a mocking sting of defeat and delusion must cut into the mind of the Christian world, upon the inescapable realization now that not in two thousand years has the primal, the central, premise of the Christian religion had one single vindication. The resurrection promise, the one last bulwark of the faith, has never once had fulfilment! Dolefully the Easter chant, all the while magnificent and soul-lifting beyond words in its non-Christian esoteric relevance, will have to be sung:

*Our Lord may have risen!
We never shall rise.*

As a sheer conclusion of simple logic, it could long ago have been known, as the most irrefutable dialectical outcome from the premises, that a physical resurrection, likewise a physical death, could not affect or alter in the minutest degree the moral order and stability of the world of sentient beings. Therefore it should long ago have been concluded that the "death" and the "resurrection" that were central in every national epic, myth and Scriptural allegory, as well as in all tribal ceremonial, must be understood as a figurative or pictorialized representation of *another* "death" and "resurrection,"

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that were never real in concrete factuality, but were perennial as spiritual realities of all human life. That recognition, which was the achievement of early Sages who inspired the Scriptures, would have kept the common mind of the Western world in sane balance. Alas! That balance was violently unsettled from the fateful third century onward, and we have by no means even yet, in religion and psychology, in theology and philosophy, emerged from its darksome shadows. Both our Christmas and our Easter are dimmed in their joyousness by the lowering delusion of a totally false reference of the dramatism.

In vindication of the position here supported, that no man's single death could reorient all other men's relation to their moral and evolutionary destiny, we have, in confirmation of Johannes Weiss' sagacious pronouncement the very recent statement of one who stood at the very summit of ecclesiastical position in the Protestant world, the Rt. Rev. Ralph W. Inge, Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, in his late volume, *The End of an Age* (p. 162):

"This emphasis on religious experience as the seat of authority obviously alters the center of gravity in apologetics. The traditional approach is from miracle to faith. We used to be told that our religion stands or falls with the discovery of the empty tomb. This is a disastrous line of argument, for not only does a miraculous event require a cogency of evidence, which from the nature of the case is not to be had, but it is not clear how the resuscitation of a dead body can prove anything either as to the divinity of Him who was restored for a few days to earthly life, or how this miracle *can guarantee our own participation* in eternal life, since our bodies will return to dust. Miracle, many of us now believe with Goethe, is the child, not the

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parent of faith . . . The details of what happened nineteen hundred years ago are not essential to our faith as Christians, and certainty about them is not available."

No apology is needed for injecting into our effort to limn the glory and sublimity of the Easter imagery a digression into the field of theological debate or polemics. For no attempt to orient the majestic import of Easter in its proper sphere of mental-mystical recognitions can have even a modicum of success as long as the mind clings to the merest vestige of the historical basis of the festival. Only when at last the mind wipes away the "history," the alleged reanimation of a man's cadaver in a rocky tomb in the long past (as St. Paul affirms we must), can the spirit be free to soar into the clear pure upper air of the stupendous light of understanding of the festival's meaning for all men. Only when the true apprehension of its portent for our life brings it all within the purview of the individual's own history, will its anthems and halleluiahs begin to lift souls into the heights of ecstasy and divine intoxication. The dust of "history" that has settled heavily upon the structure has too completely obscured vision and prevented recognition of the fundamental meaning of this festival of consummative earthly jubilee. That true meaning, in a nutshell, is that the soul's life in mundane bodies is the gestation or pre-natal period of its enwombment in the body of Mother Matter and that Easter is its birthday into the higher world of the gods.

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THE DATE OF THE RESURRECTION

This, the esoteric understanding of the Easter significance, was in the early days so clear and evident that, be it known as historically a fact, the primitive Christians, for the first three and one-half centuries, celebrated the *birth* of the Savior on--March 25! This custom was changed by encyclical of Pope Julian II, who in the year 345 A.D. ordained the shift of December 25. The decree stated that it was fitting that the Christians should be in accord with the custom of the followers of Mithra and of Bacchus, who celebrated the rebirth of the solar deity at the winter solstice. One must guess why so salient a fact of Christian history has been kept from the knowledge of the people! Prayers offered up in Christian worship in the earliest days of the faith were addressed to "Our Lord the Sun," evidencing that "primitive" Christians were quite in the spirit of Pagan forms and ideologies. But the shift of the date of the celebration of the Lord's *birth* from March 25 to December 25 clearly attests to the singular fact--one never apprehended hitherto--that the early Christians, who were at least by the third century the most ignorant of the population (attested to by more than one historian), simply had confused the symbolism of the "quickenings" at the winter solstice with the true *birth* at the vernal equinox. This is not improbable, nor is it to be held as a blunder of gross proportions, since in the aura of symbolic thought each one of the four "points" of the zodiac--the two equinoxes and the two solstices--can be regarded as a "birth." Is a babe not

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"born" when it is conceived; or again when it is quickened from "death" to life? And if those early Christians were working in the indeterminate field of emblemism, who shall say that they were in error in naming the soul's final *deliverance* from the womb of fleshly body at Easter as its day of *birth*? For the delivery is the birth.

Pagan usage, however, had designated the winter solstice as the date of the rebirth of the solar god in the year, and it is evident that by 345 A.D. the consensus of common tradition forced the Christian party to conform to the Pagan calendar of festivals. And all this strongly points to the obvious recognition that neither the vernal nor the winter date was fixed with the remotest reference to the actual calendar date of a babe's human birth. The question always debated in esoteric circles was whether the birthday should be set at the equinox or at the solstice; never was it--and why not?--a question simply of the day and date on which it actually occurred! The day chosen was fixed on purely symbolic grounds; but if it occurred as history, why was not the matter of historical factuality the only considered ground of dating? We do not try to fix the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington by any zodiacal consideration, but go by precise evidence that they fell on certain days of the month. Christians must face the stern fact that their Christ's birth, as also his resurrection, is dated astrologically and not historically. And will they be able to follow the implications of this datum to their logical conclusion, that the events themselves are obviously not historical? What must be considered a singular, indeed wholly unaccountable fact in Christian annals, is that, if there was doubt or ques-

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tion or difference of opinion among early century Christians as to the date that would fittingly celebrate Jesus' birth, we have no evidence of dispute, quarrel or controversy over the actual date. It must be concluded that no calendar date was even thought of as in question; and that therefore the birth itself was not considered a matter of factual occurrence. The only ground for difference and debate was a matter of seasonal symbolism.

What we have to discern in all this is that the content of meaning conceived by the millions of devotees as to the Easter festival, and therefore the misguided spirit of its celebration, are all one hollow travesty, yes, mockery of the true significance. It has been twisted into a gross fantastic and deadening misinterpretation of a truly sublime and transcendent fact, or epoch, in the living drama of the human evolution. The millions go on believing in the resurrection of a corpse (though we have Weiss' assurance that they really do not believe it), which they have been told guarantees their own similar rehabilitation after decease. Yet their common sense and their own observation make them wonder why such a doctrine was ever promulgated. So the glorious potential of even the vicarious realization of Easter joys is dissolved out in wonder, doubt, bafflement of logic and all-around confusion -- a tragic disillusionment of Easter's potential raptures.

No, Easter can not mean a physical resurrection, for such is not in the order of nature, as Dean Inge flatly states. We find the *Book of Ecclesiastes* saying: "The body returns to dust, but the soul to God who gave it." Likewise St. Paul declares (*1 Cor.* 15:35) that "some

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man will say, How are the dead raised up; and with what body do they come?" And the apostle then gives the answer to this pivotal question, which, had his Church heeded it, would have spared it the agonizing doubt and confusion that has plagued it for centuries. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." And he reminds us that we have a *spiritual body*. That Church which he, rather than the Jesus whom he seems never to have heard of, (since he never once mentions him as a living person), is said to have founded, has never unreservedly endorsed his claim to our possession of a sublimated body of spirit essence, as being a bit too "theosophical." But since flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God, the soul must be resurrected in a body of imperishable ethereal substance, which will not dissolve with that of the flesh. Had Christian development held fast to the basic data of the archaic science of the soul, of which the ancient Sages were adepts, the theology of the Church would have preserved knowledge of the inner bodies of rarefied essence that shared existence with the outer sheath of flesh, the "coat of skin" of the *Genesis* allegory. The ancient Egyptians laid down the particulars of the structure of man's interior constitution. The universe was build on number, asserted Pythagoras; and the basic number underlying all life on earth was seven. Partaking of the nature of this life, man had seven bodies, and the Egyptians described, graded and named them (from the coarsest to the finest): the *khat*, or *khabit*; the *ren*, or *name*; the *sekhem*; the *ba*; the *ka*; the *sahu* and the *khu*.

At the present stage man's consciousness ranges over the four lower levels, as these are the only ones develop-

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ed to function thus far. These are the four sides of the base of the pyramid of life, and on this base the three-sided development is being, and for the most part is yet to be, built up. Man is therefore pressing on toward the unfoldment of the higher bodies, and in these he will be resurrected out of the "tomb" of the lower four. So St. Paul is quite right in saying that men's souls are sown in a natural body (the lower four), and raised in a spiritual body (the developing upper three). The evolution of the upper three is made possible by their ability to transmute "into the likeness of their own glorious bodies" (St. Paul) the atomic essence of the lower four, precisely as the flame of a candle is able to transmute into its own fiery essence the coarser substance of the lower body of tallow. So that again the very theosophically minded apostle tells the truth of the hoary ancient science in saying that we are reborn in a radiant spiritual body as we die unto the old heavier bodies of matter in which Mother Nature gave us physical birth.

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THE RESURRECTION BODY

And Oh! That body of our resurrection! That body of many names, yet all reflecting the ineffable splendor of the sun! Truly it is to be a body woven of the impalpable texture of solar glory. It is that shining garment of the redeemed, who exult before the regained throne of God "in robes of light arrayed." It is the radiant vesture of the righteous, who, the Scripture says, "shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." It is that garment without a seam, woven of the imperishable cloth of sunlight. It is the spiritual body which St. Paul insists we possess by virtue of our sonship of the heavenly Father. Again he describes it as that house or tabernacle with which we wait to be clothed upon from above; that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, in whose construction there was heard neither sound of hammer, axe or any tool of iron; that house that Wisdom hath builded on its seven pillars (*Proverbs*). IT is that radiant Augoeides of the Greeks, the glorious *sahu* or *khu* of the Egyptians, the Shekinah of the Hebrews. It is that body of the infant Christ in us, which every thought, word and deed of kindliness, graciousness, brotherhood and love causes to shine with ever increasing beauty, and which every mean, sordid, selfish and brutal motive causes to dim and flicker low. It is that body whose essence will transmute all the gross elements of sensuality and brutishness into the beauteous flame of glowing love. For it is a fiery alembic in which all the baser ingredients of the old Adam, first or natural man, will be thrice refined to spiritual purity. It is that high atomic potency of which one of our hymns sings:

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*The flame shall not hurt thee! I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.*

It is the etherealized substance which, when brought to bright pitch, will transfigure the mortal part of man so that, like the Christ's, his face will "shine as the sun and his garments will become white as the light." It is the robe of our immortality which we don to appear in beauty when we return to the Father. Or it is the scarlet robe with which the Father hastens to clothe us as we return victorious from our adventure in the rougher country of earth.

No man can be told a fact of more transcendent importance to his life than that in his physical body, as in a womb, he is now slowly gestating this body of the infant god which he is to be. And this is that glory-body that he will deliver to its birth as the wondrous Sun of Righteousness rises in his being with healing in its wings. Beside this stupendous fact all the mass of religious belief that a man in history two thousand years ago died as we die, and rose as we shall not rise, and that in some incredible way this "event" became the sole implementation of our eternal life, falls dead and meaningless, indeed crushes down the spirit of man. Beside this twisted fabric of untruth stands the thrilling realization that our salvation, our resurrection, our hope, nay, our certitude of immortality, rests securely upon the foundation fact that our divinization is a process that works like yeast in the very body of our life. No man can disillusion us of this salvation, or rob us of its reality, since, under God, it is a process entrusted to our own hands, a living process, to be studied and mastered for its final outcome in unspeakable blessedness.

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THE MATING OF SUN AND MOON

Mention has already been made of the fact that in the early Christian centuries up to 345 A.D. the community of the "brethren"

celebrated the birth of their Sun-Savior on March 25, doubtless following the suggestiveness of springtime rebirth. Since that dating has astrological and not historical significance, it will be most profitable to inquire into several aspects of this feature of the festival. Indeed it will be found that in these determinations lie hidden the cryptic, or "occult" meanings of the festival itself.

To begin with, the date of Easter is a moveable one, not fixed to a calendar day. It may fall on any Sunday between March 22 and April 23, and is bound to shift each year. So again it must be noted that no moveable date could be considered the anniversary of a historical event. If it were such there would have been no resort to a shifting date. Likewise no zodiacal configuration would have been made a guiding consideration. The dating is clearly and purely semantic.

It is generally, first of all, not known why the twenty-fifth of the months (of March and December) was chosen as the day of the festivals. Such matters were treated of old as secrets of the Mystery brotherhoods, and so remained veiled as "occult mysteries." But when it is taken into account that in the Scriptures generally the resurrection was to occur "on the third day," or "after three days," it seems certain that these principal festivals of the religious calendar were marked as *tridua*,

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or festivals of three days duration, counting from the actual date of the equinox of spring, in the one case March 21 (or 22), and December 21 (or 22) in the other. "On the third day" reckoned from the twenty-second, or "after three days", counting from the twenty-first, would bring it on the twenty-fifth. In the confusion of Christmas and Easter symbology, the date became the twenty-fifth in both cases. Twenty-five was not in itself of marked significance in religious numerology, as were the first of the month (new moon), the seventh (Sabbath), the tenth (the original zodiacal number, and the Sephirothal construction), or the fourteenth (or fifteenth), the day of the full moon. Three-day periods were frequent in the round of religious festivals of the year.

The date of Easter has been set in relation to considerations having to do with the conjunction of the two celestial orbs that give light to the earth, the one by day, the other by night--sun and moon. The actual and vital significance of this astronomical basis is close to vital significance of this astronomical basis is close to being a great lost item of knowledge even in the religion of the Christianity that most lavishly celebrates the festival. Again it will be noticed that the basic feature of the ground-plan which allocates the date for the rite stands utterly remote from any reference to an event of objective occurrence. It lies sublimated in the rarefied upper atmosphere of symbolism. And in this higher realm of abstract relevance alone it finds its meaning.

Easter, then, is fixed to fall on the first Sunday coming on or after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox. If there happens to be a full

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moon on March 20, the date must wait twenty-seven days for the first full moon following March 21. And if that should fall on a Monday, six more days must pass before there is a Sunday. If there should chance to be a full moon on March 21 and that were a Sunday, Easter would come on that day.

The base of the symbolic reference is the fact that in all archaic and arcane philosophy the sun and moon typified respectively the *divine spiritual* and the *earthly physical* natures in man. The deep secret of the entire matter lies buried under the forgotten datum of ancient knowledge that the spiritual Christ, man's higher deity, his innermost soul, is generated, birthed and glorified in the constitution of the mortal human through the wedlock, or conjunction of the two natures, the divine and the human. Therefore the analogical science of old, searching in outer nature for the vivid types of the inner reality of man's experience, turned first to the spring of the year, when nature herself staged the immortal drama of rebirth in the outer scene. "Dead" nature, life congealed to dormancy in winter's icy clutch, put on its resurrection in the spring. Easter must therefore

come in the season of resurrected nature.

And for the union of the two great bodies, typifying the marriage and copulation of soul and body to give birth to the divine child in man, the celebration must be dated relative to the conjunction of sun and moon closest after the equinoctial date. The copulation taking place at the dark day of the moon's round of twenty-eight days, the festival then must wait for the consummation of the "pregnancy" of Mother Moon,

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which comes with the rounded orb of light in fourteen (or by solar reckoning, fifteen) days, the full moon. The complete coverage of her body with solar rays sublimely pictorialize the completion of her divinization, or end of her pregnancy, as of a mother ready to deliver her child. "Thy whole body shall be full of light," says the Christian Scripture, and this child of soul-and-body creation, personalized by Horus in the ancient Egyptian dramas, exultingly exclaims: "My whole body is filled with light; there is no part of me that is not a god; I am divine in every part." "I am one of those who are glorified in Annu," he says again. When the Christos is glorified in the body, it is ready to be delivered forever from its womb of flesh in mortal life, and be born into the glorious company of the immortal gods. Easter, the birthday of the gods.

And finally, as this child of the spiritual sun and moon is destined for solar glorification, as he is spiritual-solar in essential being, only one day of the week can fittingly be chosen to depict this majestic character of his life and destiny, and that of course is *Sunday*. The seventh sub-cycle in any cycle was the crowning epoch which consummated six preparatory days with the generation of the spiritual product of the cycle at its last stage. The six preceding "days" marked the creation of the planets and the seventh brought to birth the sun-child of the higher spiritual consciousness. Plutarch affirmed that man derived his physical body from the earth,—as he obviously does; his emotion-body from the moon (the moon strongly affects our psychic, especially emotional, states); his mental body from Venus; and his spiritual body from the sun. One ancient legend

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asserts that the soul spends the first six "days" of its residence in a planetary system in one after another of the six planets, and its seventh "day" in the sun of the system. The birth of the spiritual body, which is essentially the ground fact of Easter, must therefore be celebrated on a Sunday.

The conjunction of sun and moon at the dark of the moon impregnates the lunar orb with the seed of divine light and in two weeks she brings this child of the sun to full maturity. Easter, then, carries in its significance the poetry of spring, of the equinox,—the powers of spirit and matter being then equilibrated,—of the union of sun (spirit) and moon (body), of the full moon and of the symbolism of Sunday. And whereas the Christ-birth at the winter solstice is always dramatically pictured as occurring *at night*, the resurrection must, for equally pertinent semantic considerations, be placed on Easter *morn*. The sun of spring is rising, that is, increasing daily in power, and spring is the morning of the year. So at Easter the sun-in-man is rising out of his winter of embodiment in the new morn of his generative cycle. And so, as sings the Psalmist, "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The morn of resurrected life rhythmically follows every night of spirit's incarnation in body.

From one point of view it is legitimate to surmise that as the early Christians confused the Christmas quickening with birth symbolism and placed the birth of the Sun of God in March, so possibly they likewise were confused about the festival of forty days which commemorated the period of incubation of life-seed in

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the earth, and therefore shifted Lent to the wrong side of the year! There is strong, indeed almost irrefutable support for the assertion that all the significations of Lent appertain in nature's book of typism to the autumn. The spirit of Lent is entirely negative, the intimations are all dour, sad and dismal. Thus it rightly would find fitting appositeness only in the fall, when the sun-in-man, descending like the sun in the sky of autumn to shorter and feebler daily manifestation, or obscuration of its power, and sinking under the dominion of darkness, is pictured in the old Ember Days festivals as sitting like Cinderella in her hovel trying to keep warm beside the dying embers of her hearth-fire. Many forms of this dramatism survived in different lands and all were ritualized in the autumn.

We have in fact in our year of commemorative days a period of forty days, beginning with the fall equinox of September 21 and ending on October 31. This "autumn Lent" is terminated by our Hallowe'en carousal on October 31, and this is followed on the following day, November 1, by All Souls' Day, or All Saints' Day, the more ancient Michaelmas. In England Hallowe'en was formerly called Nutcracker's Night. The four cardinal "corners" of the zodiac were dedicated to the four chief Angles of the Presence, Gabriel, Raphael, Michael and Uriel. Michael's station was at the fall equinox. It could be affirmed that the period of forty days in the fall is the true Lent. This will no doubt be refuted by orthodox religionism, which will point to the etymological derivation of Lent from the German *Lenz*, meaning "spring." The evidence is not at hand to support a claim that this German word is not the parent of "Lent."

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The change of a "z" to a "t" is not frequent in language derivatives. But even if the claimed source be correct, it does not alter the fact that the symbolic elements of the Ember Days and the soul's descent to darkness and destitution of light in the bodily milieu down here would suggest autumn as the fitting time for dramatizing the crucifixion, death and burial and all the gloom of Passion Week, as well as the whole of Lent. The observance of Lent in the spring, when beyond all argument the psychological intimations of the Lenten message and motive are entirely out of accord with the spirit of nature springing to new life in every blade of grass, bud and leaf, in growing sunshine and beauty on every side, must be considered an anachronism of the sorriest and most glaring ineptitude. Certainly in the long run it has gone far to dim the sun of happy springtime joyousness in all the life of Christianity.

By every suggestion of symbolism the Christ-in-us suffers his agony, endures his crucifixion and makes his sacrifice of life for our salvation most appropriately under the natural allegorism of autumn and winter. To shift the focus of the human heart on this phase of the religious life over to the spring is to cast a cloud over the face of the sun itself. A devout heart and a philosophically balanced mind can without psychological detriment synchronize pious sentiment in the fall with the idea of the sufferings and "death" of our ensouling deity, for nature herself is chanting the same melancholy refrain. But to superinduce this gloom in the spring is to flout the very spirit of the light. Ignorant misconception perpetrated a gross blunder, which has darkened the brightness of the springtime in the hearts

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of men in the West. Can any verses in our Scriptures be more thrilling than those of the Old Testament *Song of Solomon* (2:10-13)?:

"Rise up, my love; my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle [dove] is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

These inspiring lines must be taken as a part of the dramatism which represented the life of the soul in matter. It is indeed the Easter theme-song rhapsodizing in tune with greening boughs and singing birds. The adjuration to "rise up" and "come away" is addressed to the divine sun-soul in man, when the day of final victory and release from the bondage of bodily existence has dawned, and the very voice of God shouting through his creation bids the soul come forth to greet the morn of its everlasting triumph.

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THE SPRINGTIME OF THE SOUL

Beyond all argument, as it would be inappropriate to stage the ritualism of resurrection in autumn (although fruit gathering and harvest home festivals do in a measure just that), so it is an error to set the crucifixion, the fasting, the scourging, the privation of happy life in the spring. Likewise it appears that by some further inadvertence or misconception the Christian leadership introduced Palm Sunday ahead of its proper time in festival ordination. In the Christian year it stands a week before Easter, and thus falls five days *ahead* of the crucifixion. By all the logic of analogy the soul's entry in triumph into the "holy city" of higher being, with choral halleluiahs and floral carpets to welcome it, marks the final consummation of the whole long run of its pilgrimage through the kingdoms of matter and its return to heaven above. In one view it even represents a later stage than Easter itself. For the latter portrays the final release of soul from its prison of flesh; the entry into the Holy City must dramatize its reascension to its celestial home. It seems utterly inept to introduce it ahead of the crucifixion. This Christian arrangement presents the illogical sequence of final reunion of the soul with its heavenly home, then the crucifixion, which surely is the pain of its immersion in the body on earth, and then its release from body. As Easter depicts its release from the prison of matter, Palm Sunday must point to the later release from earth altogether. Palm Sunday should therefore supplement and complete the Easter event, bringing it to its ultimate conclusion in the world above. As intimated, the

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crucifixion should come in the fall, and Easter and Palm Sunday should follow as crowning triumph in the vernal season.

There is only one way by which the allocation of Lent's forty days to the spring may possibly be saved the charge of anachronism. It has to do with the significance of the number forty. This number, which occurs sixty-four times in the Old Testament, carries always the emblemism of the incubation of spirit in matter. This connotation was based on the item from nature that the wheat sown in the flooded fields bordering the Nile River during its inundation was held to lie forty days in the earth before germinating. Also the period of gestation of the seed of human life in the mother's body is forty weeks.

Now it would obviously be impossible to institute a festival of forty days to cover in its symbolism the autumn gloom of the crucifixion motive and terminate with the springtime joy of Easter resurrection, for forty days will not reach from autumn beginning to spring end. To do this would require a whole six-months festival, from September 21 to March 21. It doubtless seemed permissible then to insert the forty days period in the spring, beginning it at such a date that the fortieth day would end it on Easter morning. This scheme was saved from ineptitude--if intelligently envisaged as pure symbolism and not outraged by historical appurtenances--by the fact that the forty days of Lent ended in the glorious denouement of Easter day.

Likewise, as the numbers three and seven also carried the intimations of soul's life in body, it seemed pro-

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per to insert periods of three and seven days in the place where their termination would also coincide with Easter morning. This gave us the seven days of Passion Week and the "three days" in the tomb, if the actual time from Friday morning to Sunday morning can be called three days. As all's well that ends well, all three periods, Lent, Passion Week and the days in the tomb end the drama with the burst of Easter glory.

The Fundamentalist will challenge us to declare the authenticity of all this semantic flourish. To him the events were historical occurrences, and they came when they occurred, not being obligated to fall in with the scheme of poetic nature symbolism. The only answer needed to rebut this contention is that, if he will study with sufficient assiduity the history of ancient religious literature which produced his venerated Bible and discover the strange methodology of religious writing in that remote age, he will see that which will disconcert his entire system of Scriptural interpretation,—the incontrovertible fact that those venerable Sages *never wrote* religious books in the form of veridical personal or national history. What they essayed to write was embalmed in forms of suggestive typism, such as myth, allegory, drama, number graphs and astrological pictography. By these methods they put forth the great truths of life and consciousness in forms of representation that would eternally adumbrate their reality to the human mind, however dull. Knowing that the essence of spiritual experience and the mind's realization of high truth are things that can not be expressed or conveyed by words alone, in fact never are fully communicable by language, they resorted to the only method that can

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impress true meaning even unconsciously on the brain. Every natural object and phenomenon in the living world is an objective photograph of an elemental truth. Every object in nature mirrors a cosmic or spiritual truth. Man needs but to gaze at and reflect upon outer nature to find glyphs of the basic principles of knowledge appertaining to a higher world and level of consciousness. The laws and ordinances of spirit are adumbrated in nature's operations and spectacles.

Have we not seen that the reality of our eventual resurrection is foreshadowed by the vernal chanting of birds, the leafing of trees, the outburst of life from wintry thralldom? Can we not see it also in the insect's bursting out of its old shell, rending the veil of its temple; in the snake's shedding of its old skin and coming forth in a sleek new body—which even we humans imitate by an Easter parade of new garments;—in the chick's breaking through its shell to be born into a higher kingdom of life? Are we so crass that we can not discern the allegorical beauty and awesome sublimity of ancient Scriptures, but must take their constructions of dramatic genius as episodes of a history that is always dull and meaningless unless haloed by the mind's apprehension of lofty truth?

Ages before Christianity took over and ruinously travestied the secret traditions of a primeval revelation by outrageous literalization of pictured truth, nature herself had staged so impelling a drama of the Easter resurrection that nothing within the pale of human genius can do more than faintly copy its impressiveness. We owe the knowledge of it to the sapient Egyptians,

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who manifested almost a sixth psychic sense in discerning in the characteristic traits of animals many striking analogies with abstract verities. Perhaps in no one respect have they revealed a more astonishing correspondence between animal trait and

cosmical law than in the case of the cynocephalus, or dog-headed ape. There was a wide-spread tradition that certain species of apes assembled at the time of sunrise on a river bank or elevation facing the east, and with prostrations, cries and a semblance of attempted speech which Gerald Massey describes as "clicking," they saluted the lord of day as he appeared above the horizon. Likewise members of the species were kept in Egyptian temples so that the priests might know the precise time of the conjunction of the sun and moon each month, because at the very moment of this occurrence the male bows down to the ground as if lamenting the ravishment of the moon and goes blind, while the female, also prostrated, menstruates. Then to denote the renovation of the moon the priests depicted the animal standing upright with his hands raised to heaven, and a diadem on his head.

Mere words can add little to what nature has staged in her pantomime. In the mute action of the ape life was promising the gift of speech with the rise of intellect. At the sheer symbolic rise of the emblem of divine light the animal creation gave first expression of the instinct to communicate ideas by speech. It was the foreshadowing of a far later stage of advancement, when, one whole kingdom farther uplifted, the human was to stage the drama of his rising into a supernal realm of being under the symbol of the Easter resurrection. As the physical light rose on the sight of the animal, the latter felt the

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stir of the impulse to frame ideas in speech. As the spiritual light is rising in the mind of man, he feels the stir of the impulse to embrace and express immortal life and immortal love. The physical sun caused the cynocephalus to break into speech; the sun of mind caused the man to consummate the powers of speech. When the sun of the spiritual resurrection at last breaks upon the soul, all speech will be transcended by lightning flashes of perfect cognition.

Easter meaning and Easter ecstasy will forever elude us if we can not understand it as the drama, not of one man's history long passed and historically demonstrated as powerless to give us the immortality it has been presumed to promise, but of our own life history, the scenario of our transfiguration yet to come. If we chant at Easter the unfolding of the portals everlasting, it can be only to refer to our own opening the doors of sense to the entry of spirit. If we acclaim the Christ's triumph over decay, it can mean only that a potency of Christly consciousness within our own natures will not perish with our flesh, but will live on in higher vehicles, returning to earth many times to build up their perfection. If we sing of the Savior's taking captivity captive, it is that we can develop this more dynamic power of godliness and with it subdue and govern the carnal nature that held us captive, stepping out into freedom as the fiery power of spirit melts down the chains that bound us. If we commemorate the Lord's bursting the gates of hell and flinging wide the bolted bars to release the captives that sat in darkness, it is that we shall in ecstasy abandon the last body of our earthly incarnation and soar to freedom. When nature bursts out of her winter's

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"death" and arrays herself in new and glistening garments, it is the sign that we, too, shall burst out of our underworld confinement and come forth clothed with light.

But only by lifting the reference of all its imagery from ostensible ancient history and making it the drama of our own experience will the great festival be able to exercise its exalting efficacy upon our spirit. After all St. Paul is grandly right: if Christ be not risen, then is our faith vain. For if Christ be not risen *in us*, risen out of the pettiness, the sordidness, the ignorance, rapacity, greed and the fell instincts of our brute nature, to breathe in the pure air of graciousness, godliness and love, then indeed is our faith in the resurrection vain and empty. If he be not risen in us, then truly enough we have no part in the resurrection. Without this transformation in our own natures, we keep the Christ still bound in his cerements of "death" in the only tomb in which he ever lay "dead"--our mortal body.

The Judean myth is a supremely beautiful emblemism of the miracle of the resurrection. But if we for a moment permit it to lure us into the belief that another man's alleged conquest of death in the long past in any degree relieves us of the evolutionary task of achieving our own resurrection, the myth becomes the source of a tragic psychological calamity for us. For to the extent to which we look to a man, or a miracle, or any power outside ourselves, to that extent we will let the sleeping divinity within us lie unawakened. Our great psychologist Jung has set this forth with the courage of a crusader for truth.

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Never has the logical purport of the twenty-first verse of the inspiring fifteenth chapter of *1 Corinthians*, called the chapter of the resurrection, been grasped in its pregnant message for all theology. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." On the historical thesis of interpretation the implication of the first clause of this declaration is that man generic brought Jesus to his death. That is to say, it rests on the presupposition that mankind killed Jesus, physically. This is of course absurd, and rules out the possibility of such an egregious interpretation, which, however, the historical thesis demands. The verse, as likewise many others, simply does not supply the premises for the historical rendering. In the seventh chapter of his *Epistle to the Romans* St. Paul also states that sin rose up and killed him and that he had died. Yet he was sitting up alive when he wrote the verses! Nothing has ever been so blind as the theology that has looked at these texts for centuries, yet failed to see that the "death" referred to had never a thing to do with bodily demise! It carried the Greek philosophical connotation of the relative "death," that is, the inertness, torpidity, the unawakened latency of *the soul*, when in incarnation it lay buried down under the heavy stifling vibrations of the earthly animal nature of the body in which it had been implanted.

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SKYLARK AT HEAVEN'S GATE.

In the light of this elucidation provided by Greek philosophy the baffling mystery of Paul's language in the letter to the Romans stands revealed in full clarity. There are two "men" in our constitution, the first or natural man, first Adam, of the earth, earthly; and the second or spiritual man, the new Adam (Christ), born not of water (the physical body, which is seven-eighths water) but of air (*spiritus*) and fire, as says John the Baptist. St. Paul sets forth succinctly the relation of these two natures, when (in 4th *Galatians*) he says, "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit." "So also is it now," he reminds us. The lower sensual "man" in us brings the divine soul to its "death" in the body. When soul enters body, states Paul, sin, which was powerless when soul was yet in heaven, springs to life and "kills" it. So we have at last the glowing meaning of the apostle's vivid statement that by man came death, "man" here standing clearly for the first Adam, the human animal, earthly, sensual devilish. For this is the unregenerate carnal animal, product of the purely biological evolution, that overwhelms the infant god when he steps into the habitation of the flesh and smothers him to "death" under the incubus of the animal nature.

But now emerges the thrilling second part of the verse, the sequel to the first clause, the mighty truth that again a blind theology has stubbornly refused to see. If by animal humanity came the "death" of divine soul, by the same element in man's make-up will come

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also the resurrection! One finds the illuminating analogy that supports this conclusion in that universal textbook of answers to all riddles, the world of nature. The seed goes into the earth and the earth brings it to its "death." But it is that same earth that in the turn of the cycle, at the spring season, will bring that "dead" seed to its resurrection, its germination. Says Jesus in the Gospels, "Unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." And again St. Paul clinches the interpretation in saying, "For as in [the first] Adam all die, even so in Christ [the last Adam] shall all be made alive." All spirit gives its life, goes to its "death" to uplift the physical creation below its level. It pours out its lifeblood of divine potential so that lower orders may have more abundant life. But for its sacrificial effort, its divine oblation, it is wondrously repaid by matter with the baptism of a new birth through its roots in matter's essence.

The ineffable tragedy of Western religious history lies in this unconscionable blunder of Christian theology in traducing surpassing spiritual allegory into ostensible personal history, in mistaking the central figure in the universal Mystery drama for a man of flesh in that history. When may it be realized that the actual divine power that was personified in drama and ritual by a human actor, *can* be resurrected from its torpor under the sluggish nature of the body and, thus lifted up, *can*, as its personification says, draw all men up with it? And when, too, will it be realized that the alleged personal man whom a hallucinated theology has mistakenly substituted for the spiritual actuality he only represented

in the play, never could in the remotest degree be the means of effecting universal salvation? Once the depressing psychological blanket of two thousand years of mentality stupefied by the mirage of a personal man-God as the agent of human redemption from animality to godliness is lifted from off the consciousness of the Western world, then may be generated in all hearts the wondrous transforming power of the Easter message. It is probably much truer as fact than as poetic figurism to say that the heavy gravestone that the Christ-in-man still has the task of rolling away from the mouth of his "tomb" of bodily flesh to consummate his resurrection, is in large measure this very pall of ignorance that keeps that stone sealed all the tighter. For it is religion itself, its vision of truth beclouded by the mists of ghastly caricatures of the meaning of its own Scriptures, that has helped to seal the stone of ignorance that shuts us in the cave of mortal "death." It is as much as anything else the common acceptance of the Easter legend as objective history that has operated to keep the Christ still darkly imprisoned in his tomb.

In the finale, we can then reiterate St. Paul's admonition to Timothy to shun the vain and profane babblings of such as Hymenaeus and Philetus, who greatly err in declaring the resurrection already past and thus weaken the potential of all men for the resurrection still to come.